

Washington State Patrol Media Release

Chief John R. Batiste



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*****For Immediate Release*****

Date: October 10, 2005

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Idland Resigns from the WSP

Chief John R. Batiste announced this afternoon at a press conference that Mr. Michael Idland resigned from the Washington State Patrol, effective October 10, 2005.

“We understand the public’s concern that this took a long time,” said Chief John R. Batiste. “However, the WSP had to wait until the criminal investigation was resolved to complete the necessary components of the administrative review concerning his employment.”

When criminal allegations were made, Mr. Idland was removed from the workplace, and in this case was placed in jail.

Mr. Idland continued to be paid under this circumstance due to the fact that employment, under the constitution is considered a property right and before you can remove an employee’s rights you must follow due process according to case law and collective bargaining agreements. When allegations are made, they are just that, until proven. Until the investigation and due process procedures were completed, no property right could be taken or an appeal could re-instate whatever was taken from an otherwise guilty employee. More importantly this is the basic premise that our legal system is based upon. A suspect is innocent until proven guilty.

In addition, it is generally unadvisable to conduct any administrative investigation when there is an on-going criminal investigation into misconduct. The WSP has been unable to discuss this situation publicly nor have been able to proceed with the employment issue of Mr. Idland until this past week so that the criminal investigation was not jeopardized by prematurely conducting the administrative case. The WSP has moved as swiftly as legally possible to get this matter resolved in a way that can hold up to scrutiny.

“This type of behavior is not tolerated in this agency,” Chief Batiste said. “We pride ourselves on the highest of ethical standards and work hard every day to earn that respect from the public. We ask that the deplorable actions of one not be reflective of the hard work of many other men and women in our agency. This has been very difficult time for the entire Patrol and we now look forward to moving past this issue,” he added.

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